Tallahassee/Leon County, Florida

Brief History of the State of Florida and the City of Tallahassee

Thousands of years of Native American occupancy preceded the European discovery of the Florida peninsula. An estimated 100,000 Native Americans were living here at the time of its discovery by Juan Ponce de Leon in early 1513. As Ponce de Leon's arrival coincided with the Spring Pascua Florida festivities in Spain, he named the new land "Florida," which meant "filled with flowers." La Florida was also explored by another Spanish adventurer – Hernando de Soto. It is believed that de Soto and his army of over 600 men spent the winter of 1539-40 in an abandoned Apalachee Indian village located in what is now the city of Tallahassee.

Prior to 1821, Florida had consisted of two Spanish colonies that were ceded to Great Britain in the settlement of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). In 1821 President James Monroe appointed Andrew Jackson as territorial governor. One of the new governor's first acts was to organize the territory into two counties, Escambia and St. Johns, with the Suwannee River serving as the dividing line. (In 1822, two more counties were added – Duval in the east and Jackson in the west). The legislative council met at Pensacola, the capital of West Florida, in 1822, and at St. Augustine, the capital of East Florida, in 1823. As these two chief settlements of the territory were separated by 400 miles of wilderness, it was desirable to select a central site as a capital. Two commissioners appointed by Governor William Pope Duval selected the then uninhabited area known as Tallahassee as the site for the permanent capital and the governor proclaimed it the capital on March 4, 1824. The territorial council met there for the first time in November of that year. Tallahassee had been the site of Indian settlements prior to and during the Colonial Era. Its name is a Creek Indian phrase generally believed to mean "old town" or "old fields." Florida was admitted to the union as the twenty-seventh state on March 3, 1845.

Population Statistics

According to the latest US Census estimates, Florida ranks 3rd population in the United States of America, Leon county ranks 22nd in population in the state of Florida and Tallahassee is the 7th largest city in the state.

	Tallahassee	**Leon County**	**Florida**	**United States**
Population 2015 (estimated US Census)	189,907	286,272	20,271,272	321,418,820
Population 2010 (actual US Census)	181,376	275,487	18,801,310	308,745,538
Male	85,358	131,134	9,189,355	151,781,326
Female	96,018	144,353	9,611,955	156,964,212
Median Age	26.1	29.6	40.7	37.2
White	104,171	173,480	14,109,162	223,553,265
African American	63,475	83,520	2,999,862	28,929,319
Asian	6,653	8,053	454,821	14,674,252
American Indian/Alaskan Native	443	775	71,458	2,932,248
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	100	140	12,286	540,013
Other Race	2,361	3,397	681,144	19,107,368
Two or More Races	4,173	6,122	472,577	9,009,073
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	11,346	15,361	4,223,806	50,477,594
Renter-occupied housing units	58.6%	45.6%	32.6%	34.9%

Source: United States Census Bureau

Tallahassee/Leon County Weather Facts

The average annual mean temperature at Tallahassee is 67.7°F; the average annual high temperature is 79.6°F, and the average annual low temperature is 55.8°F. July is typically the hottest month, with an average high temperature of 92.1°F and an average low temperature of 72.0°F. January is the coldest month, with average high and low temperatures of 63.5°F and 39.0°F, respectively. The official record-high temperature is 105°F, which was observed on June 15, 2011. The official record-low temperature is -2°F, which was observed on February 13, 1899, which gives Tallahassee the distinction of being the only location in Florida ever to have recorded a sub-zero temperature. Since that morning in 1899, the lowest temperature recorded in the modern historical record since 1948 was 6°F on January 21, 1985.

The average annual total rainfall is 58.87 inches. July ranks historically as the wettest month, with an average total rainfall of 7.83 inches, and October ranks as the driest month, with an average total rainfall of 2.91 inches. Summer is the wettest season, and autumn is the driest. The record 24-hour total rainfall is 10.13 inches, which occurred on June 11-12, 2001. The average annual snowfall is a trace. Although snow flurries are seen every few years, measurable snow (0.1 inch or greater, by definition) is seldom observed in Tallahassee, having occurred only five times since 1938 and last occurred on December 22-23, 1989, when 1.0 inch was recorded. The largest snowfall ever observed was 2.8 inches on February 12-13, 1958.

In 2015, the temperature ranged from a minimum of 22°F (on February 22) to a maximum of 100°F (July 12, July 13, July 28, and July 29). The annual mean temperature registered 71.8°F, which was some 4.1°F above average and made 2015 the warmest year on record since 1948. In particular, the warmest spring (March through May), fourth-warmest summer (June through August), and warmest autumn (September through November) were observed. Moreover, April, May, July, November, and December were the warmest of their respective months; March was the third warmest; and August was the fourth warmest. Total rainfall for 2015 was 54.38 inches, which was some 4.49 inches below average, making 2015 rank as 22nd driest on record since 1948.

For the latest National Weather Service forecast or marine forecast, call the Weatherline Forecast Service at 850-942-8851. For additional climate information for Tallahassee or other locations in Florida, visit climatecenter.fsu.edu.

Source: Florida Climate Center/Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (http://coaps.fsu.edu)